

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Cancelled)
2. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the support element is slidable between the operative loading position and the operative work position along a movement direction.
3. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 2, wherein the movement direction lies in an essentially horizontal plane when the support device is operating.
4. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the support element is movable between the operative loading position and the operative work position by means of at least a translating or rotary displacement.
5. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 2, wherein the support element comprises at least one elongate arm that is slidable in a guide of the base body in order to displace between the operative loading position and the operative work position.
6. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 5, wherein the support element comprises two elongate arms that are slidable in guides of the base body in order to displace between the operative loading position and the operative work position.
7. (Cancelled).

8. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the means for supporting comprise at least one body that is removably constrainable to the support element for supporting said container.

9. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 8, wherein the base body is intended for directly supporting said container.

10. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 8, wherein the base body is constrainable to the support element, said base body exhibiting a manual transport organ and at least one support hook for said container.

11. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 10, wherein the manual transport organ is a handle.

12. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 10, wherein the base body comprises at least two support hooks for receiving said container.

13. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 10, wherein the base body constrainable to the support element comprises a rod that bears the manual transport organ and said at least one support hook, the support element exhibiting supports for receiving and engaging the rod.

14. (Cancelled).

15. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the support element is provided with at least one mechanical endrun stop for the operative loading position.

16. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 15, wherein the mechanical endrun stop is defined by a groove.

17. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the support element is provided with at least one further mechanical endrun stop for the operative work position.

18. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 17, wherein the further mechanical endrun stop is defined by a groove.

19. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, further comprising at least one position sensor, associated to the base body, for detecting at least the operative work position of the support element.

20. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 19, wherein the position sensor is a Hall sensor.

21. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 42, further comprising additional sensors for weighing a container associated to the support device.

22. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 21, wherein the sensors for weighing comprise at least one measuring balance.

23. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the sensors for weighing further comprise a control balance, said control balance being a further balance, the control unit receiving a signal proportional to the weight of the container to verify that the measuring balance is working correctly.

24. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein the support element further comprises a manoeuvring handle for enabling a manual displacement between the operative work position and the operative loading position, and vice versa.

25. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, wherein a loading of a container is excluded in the operative work condition of the support element.

26. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 41, further comprising stop means blocking a relative position of the support element with respect to the base body in the operative loading position and in the operative work position.

27. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 26, wherein the stop means are normally active for blocking the support element in a retracted position thereof.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 22, wherein said measuring balance for weighing is associable to a machine control unit, which is provided with a CPU configured to receive a signal proportional to a weight provided by the balance for weighing; said CPU being configured to validate said signal relating to the weight only when the support element is in the operative work position.

30-36. (Canceled)

37. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the stop means are normally active for blocking the support element in correspondence of the operative work condition where the support element is in a retracted position.

38. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the control unit is of the type selected in the group comprising: an analog control device or a digital control device

39. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 49, wherein the predetermined number is one, and wherein the control device controls the stop means

to enable extraction of a single support at a time, automatically blocking the other support elements in the operative work condition where the support element is in the retracted position.

40. (Previously Presented) The apparatus of claim 39, wherein the control device controls the stop means to enable another or the same support to be extracted once more, when the extracted support is returned to the operative work condition.

41. (Currently Amended) A support device for containers of liquids in extracorporeal blood treatment machines, or in renal failure treatment machines, comprising:

a base body;

a support element associated to the base body, the support element being displaceable with respect to the base body between at least one operative loading position, corresponding or close to a position of maximum extraction of the support element from the base body, and an operative work condition, corresponding or close to a position of minimum extraction of the support element from the base body, the support element comprising means for hanging a container;

sensors for weighing a container fixed to the base body, said sensors for weighing comprising at least one measuring balance for weighing a container hung to the support device, the means for hanging the container and the container being configured below the measuring balance in the work condition of the support element, the means for hanging the container and the container being configured laterally of the measuring balance in the loading position of the support element, and

a control unit ~~configured for receiving to receive~~, from the measuring balance, a signal proportional to the weight of the container, the control unit ~~being further configured to read reading and validating validate~~ the signal proportional to the weight of the container only in the operative work condition of the support element in which the means for hanging the container and the container are placed below the measuring balance.

42. (Currently Amended) A support device for containers of liquids in extracorporeal blood treatment machines, or in renal failure treatment machines, comprising:

a base body;

a support element associated to the base body, the support element being guided and translating with respect to the base body in a horizontal plane between at least one operative loading position, corresponding or close to a position of maximum extraction of the support element from the base body, and an operative work condition, corresponding or close to a position of minimum extraction of the support element from the base body, the support element comprising means for hanging a container and further comprising at least one elongated arm horizontally slidable inside a corresponding horizontal guide of the base body in order to displace between the operative loading position and the operative work position; and

a lower zone of a machine, the base body being fixed to said lower zone of the machine and being interposed in use between the lower zone and the means for hanging the container, the means for hanging the container being placed in use below

the lower zone of the machine and the base body.

43. (Canceled).

44. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 42 43, wherein the elongated arm and the horizontal guide define a telescopic structure.

45. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 42 43, wherein the support element comprises a further arm supporting said means for hanging a container, said further arm being placed outside the guide of the base body and movable between a loading position in which the further arm is placed laterally of the base body and a work condition in which the further arm is placed below the base body.

46. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 45, wherein the support element comprises a connecting portion for joining the elongated arm and the further arm, the connecting portion being laterally placed with respect to the base body both in the loading position and in the work condition.

47. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 46, wherein the support element comprises two elongate arms horizontally slidable in guides of the base body in order to displace between the operative loading position and the operative work position.

48. (Previously Presented) The device of claim 47, wherein the connecting portion joins together both the elongated arms and the further arm supporting said means for hanging a container.

49. (Currently Amended) A supporting apparatus comprising:

a plurality of support devices for containers of liquids in extracorporeal blood

treatment machines, or in renal failure treatment machines, each presenting:

a base body;

a support element associated to the base body, the support element being displaceable with respect to the base body between at least one operative loading position, corresponding or close to a position of maximum extraction of the support element from the base body, and an operative work condition, corresponding or close to a position of minimum extraction of the support element from the base body;

stop means for selectively blocking a relative position of each support element with respect to the base body, at least in the operative loading position or in the operative work position; and

a control unit configured to control ~~controlling~~ the stop means to enable contemporary extraction only of a predetermined number of support elements of the support devices.

50. (New) A support device for containers of liquids in extracorporeal blood treatment machines, or in renal failure treatment machines, comprising:

a base body; and

a support element associated to the base body, the support element being displaceable with respect to the base body between at least one operative loading position, corresponding or close to a position of maximum extraction of the support element from the base body, and an operative work condition, corresponding or close to a position of minimum extraction of the support element from the base body, the support element comprising:

means for hanging a container;

container weighing sensors fixed to the base body, said sensors comprising at least one measuring balance, configured to weigh a container hung to the support device, and at least one control balance, said means for hanging the container and the container being placed below the measuring balance in the work condition of the support element, and said means for hanging the container and the container being placed laterally of the measuring balance in the loading position of the support element; and

a control unit receiving, from the measuring balance, a signal proportional to the weight of the container, the control unit reading and validating the signal proportional to the weight of the container only in the operative work condition of the support element in which the means for hanging the container and the container are placed below the measuring balance, the control unit receiving a signal proportional to the weight of the container to verify the correct working of the measuring balance.

51. (New) A support device for containers of liquids in extracorporeal blood treatment machines, or in renal failure treatment machines, comprising:

a base body; and

a support element associated to the base body, the support element being guided and translating with respect to the base body in a horizontal plane between at least one operative loading position, corresponding or close to a position of maximum extraction of the support element from the base body, and an operative work condition, corresponding or close to a position of minimum extraction of the support element from

the base body, the support element comprising:

means for hanging a container;

a lower zone of a machine, the base body being fixed to said lower zone of the machine and being interposed in use between the lower zone and the means for hanging the container, the means for hanging the container being placed in use below the lower zone of the machine and the base body;

additional container weighing sensors associated to the support device, wherein the container weighing sensors comprise at least one measuring balance, said measuring balance being associable to a machine control unit, said machine control unit being provided with a CPU configured to receive a signal proportional to a weight provided by the measuring balance, said CPU being configured to validate said signal relating to the weight only when the support element is in the operative work position.